DAWN

METRO South

KARACHI Thursday, January 15, 2026

KARACHI

Sunset	06:04pm
Sunrise (Tomorrow)	07:17am

NEXT 24 HRS

Minimum	13°C
Maximum	26°C
Humidity	76%
Outlook	Partly Cloudy

Mitchell ton helps NZ level ODI series against India

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Journalist gets bail in defamation case

By Sumair Abdullah

KARACHI: A judicial magistrate on Wednesday granted bail to journalist Muhammad Aslam Shah in a case pertaining to alleged defamation on social media.

The judicial magistrate (South) on Wednesday took up the bail plea filed by Mr Shah through his counsel Nasir Ahmed.

After hearing the prosecutor representing the National Cyber Crime Investigation Agency (NCCIA), who opposed the application and the defence counsel, the court granted bail against a surety bond of Rs30,000 along with a PR bond.

Counsel Ahmed argued before the court that the NCCIA had violated Section 7 of the Protection of Journalists and Media Professionals Act, 2021.

He added the case against Mr Shah had been registered with malafide intent, alleging he had been implicated solely to "take revenge" and to save the complainant's own skin.

He contended that the offence for which the applicant had been booked was neither punishable with death nor with imprisonment for life or for 10 years, and therefore did not fall within the ambit of the prohibitory clause.

On the other hand, the NCCIA prosecutor Sheraz Rajpar contended that the content was neither published in any newspaper nor aired on a news channel and, therefore, the applicant could not be allowed to run "fake news" on social media.

The case was registered on Dec 29, 2025, on the complaint of Tabish Raza Husnain, said to be an official of the Karachi Water and Sewerage Corporation, under Sections 20 (offences against the dignity of a natural person) and Section 24 (cyberstalking) of the Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act.

The complainant had alleged that Mr Shah was doing "defamation propaganda" against him and his senior, Colonel Anjum, on social media groups.

A FLOCK of birds basks in the warm sunshine at Seaview. — Online

Despite scepticism, mayor confident to dismantle water tanker network

• Wahab asks KWSC to draft citywide water plan before phasing out tanker services, shutting hydrants • Says goal is equitable water distribution, not politics • Utility sources say closure of hydrants would hit DHA the hardest • Claims decision, if implemented, won't improve city's supply

By Imran Ayub and Tahir Siddiqui

KARACHI: While Mayor Murtaza Wahab outlined his plan to eventually dismantle the decades-old water-tanker system, officials at the Karachi Water and Sewerage Corporation (KWSC) voiced scepticism, saying it would not be possible to entirely shut down hydrants and end tanker services given the existing water infrastructure.

Talking to the reporters on Wednesday after inaugurating the Jehangir Road rehabilitation project, the mayor, who is also the chairman of the KWSC board, said that water tankers and hydrants have been operating in Karachi for decades, largely filling gaps where the piped water supply does not reach.

However, he stressed that the system has created inequities, with benefits flowing to select groups while blame is unfairly placed on the city administration.

"There is water in the city, but the real issue is its unjust distribution," the mayor said, adding that his administration has already "shut down" several illegal hydrants.

He said that the contracts of seven legal hydrants have expired, leaving the city with a choice: renew the contracts or permanently close the hydrants.

Mr Wahab said that he had proposed a third option — the gradual dismantling of the hydrant and tanker system — but emphasised that such a step could not be taken without a comprehensive alternative plan.

"If hydrants are closed, how will water reach areas that depend on tankers? I have asked officials of the KWSC to develop a practical and citywide water supply strategy. We want to end this system, but responsibly," he said.

According to the mayor, once the KWSC finalises its proposal, it will be presented to the City Council for approval. Only after formal approval will tanker services be phased out, and work on this strategy is currently underway.

Rejecting political motives behind the move, he said that his party had no hidden agenda. "This hydrant system was inherited. The beneficiaries are someone else, but the accusations are directed at us," he said.

He acknowledged that Karachi faces a genuine water shortage but reiterated that equitable distribution remains the administration's key objective.

'Hydrants closure may hit DHA hardest'

According to sources who spoke to *Dawn*, the mayor was told in a meeting with the water utility's senior management that a decision had to be made on renewing the hydrant contracts, which had already expired about seven months earlier.

They said the mayor had instructed the KWSC to consider shutting down the city's hydrants in order to achieve a fairer distribution of water.

The sources said that closing the hydrants would not improve the city's water supply, as only 15-20 million gallons of water daily (MGD), or 3.5 per cent of the total 650 MGD, was delivered through tankers.

They said that the proposed closure of hydrants would hit Defence Housing Authority's 5, 6, 7 and 8 phases the hardest, because these areas relied almost entirely on tanker deliveries to meet their daily water needs.

A DHA resident said that people in those phases already faced limited line supply and were forced to buy water from tankers, and the situation would worsen if hydrants were shut down.

Teenage maid kidnapped, sexually assaulted in Gulshan-i-Maymar

By Our Staff Reporter

KARACHI: A 17-year-old girl was kidnapped and gang-raped in Gulshan-i-Maymar on Tuesday, police said on Wednesday.

Police surgeon Dr Summaiya Syed said the teenage girl was taken to the Abbasi Shaheed Hospital, where a medical examination confirmed that she had been "subjected to sexual violence".

She added that "all relevant samples have been collected for serology, DNA profiling and cross-matching."

Police claimed they took "prompt action" and held one suspect, while efforts are underway to arrest the absconding co-accused.

The victim told a private news channel she works as a domestic help and alleged that some influential men kidnapped her and took her to an unknown location, where they subjected her to sexual and physical violence.

The victim also said that when she and her family arrived at the police station, the SHO refused to register the FIR.

Meanwhile, Inspector General of Police (IGP) Sindh Javed Alam Odho took notice of the incident and ordered the suspension and demotion of the area SHO over charges of delay in the registration of the FIR, said a police spokesperson.

IGP Odho also sought a report from the West SSP and directed him to submit a detailed inquiry report pertaining to alleged delaying tactics by the police.

Later, a case was registered on the complaint of the victim's brother at the Gulshan-i-Maymar police station.

Passer-by shot dead in Manghopir clash

By Our Staff Reporter

KARACHI: A passer-by was shot dead while four others, including a minor child, were wounded in a property dispute in the Manghopir area on Wednesday, police said.

Manghopir SHO Khush Nawaz told *Dawn* that a property dispute between Naseeb Khan and Barkat escalated near a godown, during which Naseeb allegedly opened fire. As a result, a passer-by, identified as Ehsanullah, 22, was killed.

The deceased was an employee of a nearby godown. He hailed from Chaman, Balochistan.

Barkat also sustained wounds while three other persons, Harkat Pasha, 5, Mansoor Aslam, 22, and Gul Mohammed, 45, were also wounded. The suspect managed to flee the scene.

The wounded persons and the body were shifted to the Abbasi Shaheed Hospital.

Police have registered a case against the suspect and his accomplices on the complaint of the deceased's brother, Asadullah.

According to the FIR, the complainant stated that he lived with his deceased brother at a godown in Arz Mohammed Goth.

A scuffle broke out between Barkat and Naseebullah outside the godown, followed by aerial firing, which resulted in bullet wounds to his brother. Ehsanullah sustained a single gunshot wound to the head, which proved fatal.

SHC rejects state plea against acquittal of 13-year-old in explosives case

Bench rules no link was established between boy and the substance recovered from his father's house in 2013

By Ishaq Tanoli

KARACHI: While dismissing an appeal filed by the state against the acquittal of a 13-year-old boy, the Sindh High Court has observed that the teenager was implicated in an explosive substances case merely because he was present in his father's house at the time of the alleged recovery.

The SHC also noted that the case was registered only against Hafiz Bashir Ahmed Laghari and the same was cancelled after his death, but third investigating officer (IO) had involved a minor son of the slain accused without collecting any evidence whatsoever against him.

A two-judge bench of the SHC comprising Justice Khadim Hussain Tunio and Justice Amjad Ali Sahito further said that there were inconsistencies, contradictions, missing entries and substantial evidentiary gaps in testimonies of material witnesses as prosecution had failed to establish any credible link between the juvenile accused and explosives, allegedly recovered from his father's house.

An antiterrorism court had exonerated Muavia from all charges in March last year in a case registered in 2013 under Sections 4/5 of the Explosive Substances Act read with Section 7 of the Anti-Terrorism Act, 1997 at the Surjani Town police station.

Thereafter, the state through prosecutor general of Sindh had filed an appeal against acquittal order of the trial court before the SHC.

It was asserted that police had raided the house of Hafiz Bashir in July 2013 and around 10 kilograms of explosive material was recovered while the main accused was killed in a police encounter and his son was present at the time of the recovery.

The acquitted accused in his statement before the trial court maintained that he was 13-year-old at the time of his arrest and studying in a madressah while he had remained in prison since his arrest and acquitted after around 12 years of incarceration.

He had also categorically denied that any incriminating article was recovered from his personal possession and

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Bilawal warns against plot to centralise provincial powers in Islamabad

• Says national prosperity depends on advancement of Sindh and other provinces • Inaugurates NED-affiliated Thar Institute of Engineering, Science and Technology

By Imtiaz Dharani

MITHI: Pakistan Peoples Party Chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari has said "certain forces" want to usurp provincial rights as part of a well-planned conspiracy aimed at centralising all powers and resources in Islamabad.

"Under a calculated agenda and conspiracy, certain forces seek to undermine provincial rights and seize control over resources, using the baseless pretext that the Sindh government or smaller provinces have failed to deliver and that all authority and resources should therefore be centralised in Islamabad," he said while speaking at the inauguration of the NED University-affiliated Thar Institute of Engineering, Science and Technology and the School of Modern Sciences in the desert region on Wednesday.

"From time to time, a deliberate and organised campaign is launched to malign not only Tharparkar but the entire province. Tharparkar itself stands as the strongest rebuttal to this false narrative, clearly demonstrating how the district has undergone a visible transformation in development after the 18th Amendment," he said.

He said the development of Tharparkar was inseparable from Pakistan's overall progress, stressing that national prosperity depended on the advancement of Sindh and all four provinces.

Mr Bhutto-Zardari described the educational institutions as a gift from the Sindh government to the people of Tharparkar.

He paid tribute to the people of the district for their longstanding support for the PPP and its leadership, saying the party had consistently stood with Thar through practical development initiatives.

Referring to the Thar coal reserves, the PPP chairman said the resource belonged to the people of Tharparkar and compared its scale to Saudi Arabia's oil wealth. He said earlier attempts to utilise the resource had been thwarted by conspiracies, including during the tenure of Benazir Bhutto.

He said the Thar coal project had triggered both economic and social change, providing electricity to industrial centres such as Faisalabad while transforming living conditions in the desert region.

He noted that areas once devoid of basic health facilities now had dispensaries, basic health units and hospitals, alongside new road networks.

He said a share of profits from the coal project was channelled into the Thar Foundation to fund social welfare initiatives, including hospitals being run in public private partnership with Indus Hospital.

The PPP chairman said the establishment of an NED University campus in Tharparkar had been a longstanding demand of local youth and that work on the project began in 2019.

He added that the Sindh chief minister

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PPP Chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari speaks as NED University Vice Chancellor Tufail Jokhio and Chief Minister Murad Ali Shah look on.—Dawn